



THE THOMPSON VALLEY VOICE

NOV 2008

The official newsletter
of the Thompson
Valley Composite
Squadron of the U.S.
Civil Air Patrol.



CADETS REVISIT SITE OF LARGEST CAP RESCUE

Remains of Rocky Mountain Airways Flight 217 recovered during visit that included a survivor of the crash

On Saturday, 6 September 2008, six Thompson Valley Composite Squadron cadets visited the site of the largest single incident save in the history of the CAP to gather pieces of an airplane that crashed near Buffalo Pass in 1978. Pieces of the wreckage brought back from the site will be used to create a commemorative exhibit marking the 30th anniversary of the crash and subsequent rescue.

The effort, spearheaded by 1st Lt Ed O'Brien of the Colorado Wing resulted in the recovery of parts of the Rocky Mountain Airways DeHavilland Twin Otter that went down in snow and icing conditions on December 4th, 1978. Of the 22 people on board, 20 survived, thanks to the efforts of CAP and other rescue workers, who battled blowing snow and wind to quickly find the aircraft and bring survivors to safety.

The flight originated in Steamboat Springs for a one hour trip to Denver, but steadily worsening weather caused the crew to attempt a return to Steamboat Springs. The aircraft, encrusted by ice, struck high voltage power lines and crashed at 10,530 ft near Buffalo Pass in the North Park area.

The six TVCS cadets were accompanied to the site by Capt Liz Caldwell

and 1st Lt Steve Schneider, Matt Kotts of Steamboat Springs, who was an eight month old baby aboard the flight when it crashed, as well as the first two rescuers to arrive at the downed plane, former CAP members Jerry Alsum and Neikirk, and two of the CAP command staff for that 1978 mission, Sonny Elgin and Jim Alsum.

"Hearing this story, while standing at the actual site of the downed plane is both humbling and inspiring," stated Cadet 1st Lt Skylar Caldwell.

The extraordinary rescue will be commemorated in December 2008.



Article taken from a press release describing the event. The contact was Captain Liz Caldwell.



COMMANDER'S CORNER

BY VON CAMPBELL



Well time does seem to fly, it seems that my first Commanders Corner was only yesterday. But things have been happening.

I think the biggest thing that happened has been TVCS taking possession of a new 15 passenger van. Obtaining the van has been project that spanned over a year and two Squadron Commanders. Through the persistence and dedication our own 1st Lt Steve Schneider, we were able to make a case at Wing regarding our need for a van. Steve doggedly kept the need visible and the process pursued.

With the help from good folks at Wing we (finally) took possession of a van in October. The Cadet side put it to use

almost immediately. Since we now have a vehicle we need to use it, just like we need to put hours on our aircraft. Therefore it's time for many of us to get our CAP Driver's License which is required to drive the van. Getting your CAP Driver's License is much easier than getting a Form 5 to fly our airplanes so there is no excuse not to get qualified. Just ask Steve and he can show you the ropes.

It's a good thing we got the van as our Cadet Program is continuing to grow. As a result of the last open house, the Cadet side has grown to over 70, more members than the Senior Side. Not only is our Squadron the largest in the state now, we now have more cadets than the entire Wyoming Wing. Congratulations to Maj, Niswender, 1st Lt Schneider, Capt Caldwell and the rest of the Cadet Program folks for this great success. Next I expect Steve to go for a bus and a hanger to put all our aircraft and vehicles in.

These are just a couple of the exciting happenings we've had in TVCS since our last newsletter and I expect them to continue. I want to thank everyone for all their hard work and participations in Missions, Sarex's, training, and the routine admin tasks for running a squadron. I know you could be doing other things and I really appreciate all that you all do for the squadron and CAP.

Von Campbell

von@nighthawknest.com

CADET ROCKETRY

BY JENNY NISWENDER, DEPUTY COMMANDER FOR CADETS

On Saturday, November 1, a small team of cadets and seniors converted a private grass landing strip into a model rocketry launch site. Cadets launched a variety of rockets, including the Up-Aero Scale model rocket, the Wizard rocket and the CC-Express 2-stage rocket. The first part of the launch was spent finishing the last minute preparations to the various model rockets, as well as conducting stability tests for all rockets that were launched.

A rocket must be proved to be stable before it is launched, otherwise, it may fly in dangerously unpredictable paths! The stability test is done by attaching a 6 ft string to the rocket's Center of Mass, and then spinning in a circle. If the rocket points forward during the test (i.e. into the Relative Wind), then it is stable and will fly straight when launched. Due to the size of the engines that were used on the CC-Express rockets, the center of mass on all rockets had to be adjusted, in many cases by inserting small rocks found on the landing strip into the nose cones of the rockets!

Once all of our rockets were deemed flight-worthy, the launching began!

Special thanks to Capt Russ Reed for allowing us to use his property for the launch site! It is much appreciated!!!



OPERATIONS & ICS TIDBITS

BY SUE WOLBER, OPERATIONS OFFICER

Flight Operations

Congratulations to Renewed Pilots and new qualifications:

Ed Binkley - renewed F5

Sean Blake - new Flatland Mission Pilot

Tom Ehresman - renewed F5

Stephen Hayne - renewed F5

Jerry Stooksbury - renewed F5 and flatland mission pilot

Vernon Tryon - renewed F5

Reminders and Notes

Hurrah that the G1000 plane is (finally!) back fully operational again and we can do checkrides. I know a lot of people have been waiting for this. Let's go fly!

Now that it's the start of the CAP fiscal year, we have \$\$\$ again for ROTC and CAP Cadet Orientation flights. Contact John Mitchell for the yearly ROTC training if you missed it, and to sign up for ROTC flights. Contact Brenda to sign up for CAP O-flights. Weather is an issue this time of year but we'll keep trying!

Days are getting shorter - go get night current while it's still fairly warm out there. If you didn't get Night on your last Form 5 (check the pilot roster), contact a Check Pilot and do a night F5 add-on.

Reminder that every time the hobbs ticks on the plane, there must be a Flight Log entry and an entry in WMIRS. Your friendly Flight Release Officer will do the WMIRS entry for you. Note that the latest CAP Reg 60-1 says you do not need a flight release for just a taxi flight. That's true... but... if the hobbs ticks over you DO need a WMIRS entry and a corresponding Flight Log entry.

IC Notes

Congratulations to our newest IC, Bill O'Connor!

What happens when a Mission starts:

- Air Force Rescue Coordination Center starts a mission (via unclosed flight plan, report of missing aircraft, SARSAT ELT hits, etc)

- CO Wing alert officers are paged (Len Ginther, Mike McDonald, Mark Young rotate being on call)

- Wing alert officer on call takes the RCC page, gathers info, and unless it's something easy or at 3am they page out to the appropriate Group to find an IC to own this mission.

- One of the IC's who is available takes the mission and calls

Len/Mike/Mark, info is relayed to the IC

- IC pages out to Group 2 (and often Group 1) with IC contact info and

requests aircrews and / or groundcrews

- Squadron alert officers (rotates weekly between 7 folks in TVCS /

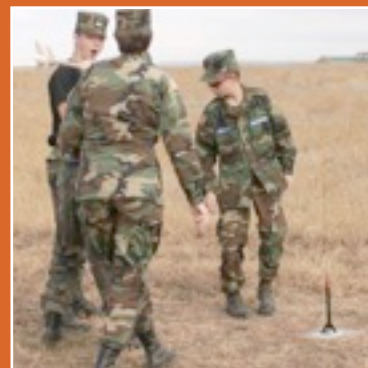
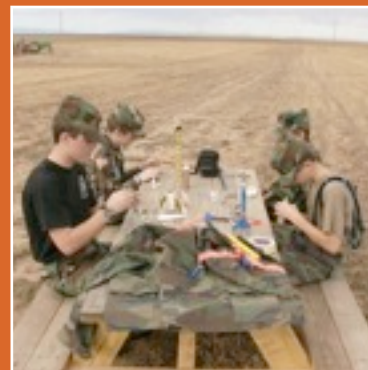
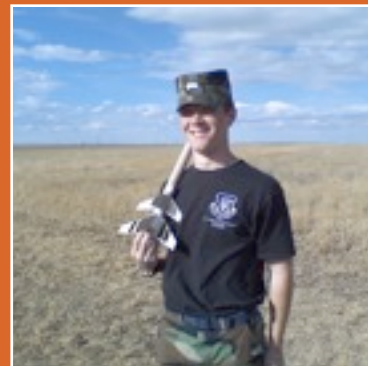
GCS) get the page and start calling around to find aircrews and ground crews as needed. TVCS / GCS will crew both 59X and 2CP.

- once a crew is put together, the PIC or GTL will call the IC for briefing and launch

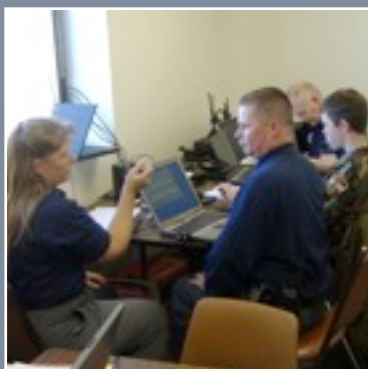
Your role is to be qualified and be ready to launch - gear and uniform ready, 101 card and membership card all in order. Check your 101 card for expirations, check the TVCS alert roster on our website to be sure it's up to date. Pilots check the pilot roster on the website. These rosters are what our squadron alert officers use to find crews. The upcoming holidays are often a busy time for search and rescue!

Lots more details can be found on the TVCS website under Alert and scroll down to Alert Officer Procedures and Squadron Member Procedures.

ROCKET SCIENCE!



SAREX PIX



Top: Ground Branch Director Josh Wepman participates in the general briefing.

Middle: Jenny Niswender and John Owen serve as Air Operations Branch Directors.

Bottom: Kristen Catlett, Eric Schwarm and an unidentified cadet staff Communications with guidance from CUL Gary Oplinger.

GROUP 2 SAREX - 15 NOV 2008

Group 2 held a SAREX on 15 November 2008 at Greeley Airport. As in past Greeley SAREX's, the exercise was held at facilities provided by Harris Aviation, as well as a remote base in Steamboat Springs. The SAREX included a variety of scenarios including beacon searches for ground teams, aircrews, and UDF teams, photo missions, route searches, ramp checks, and simulated aircraft wreckage.

According to the Incident Commander, Bill O'Connor, air and ground crews were launched in very good time, meeting or exceeding the Air Force expectations of quick response for our customers. The SAREX staff received praise from the Group Commander, Wing Staff, and Rocky Mountain Region Staff, all of whom made an unexpected visit to the Mission Base.

All the activities were carried out safely, with plenty of people completing SQTR tasks to become qualified in a variety of Emergency Services specialties.



C/1st Lt
Brittany Crooks
fuels CAPFLIGHT
559

C/1st Lt Brittany Crooks fuels CPF 559 as part of her flight line duties at the Group 2 SAREX held at Greeley Airport on 15 November 2008.

THE COMIM SHACK

BY ERIC SCHWARM, COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Narrow Band Transition Project

A variety of recent messages have discussed the status of the project to convert our radios to the narrow band channel plan. There have been a few starts and stops, but ultimately it was decided to postpone the initial wave of programming until squadron level training on the use of the radios is completed.



You might be wondering what kind of training is needed. After all, most of us already have our BCUT and ACUT training. There are several answers to that question. First, the transition channel plan is more complex than our current one. Second, that complexity requires us to use our radios a little bit differently than we are used to. Finally, the channels in mobile and portable radios won't directly match the channels in the aircraft radios. Training classes are intended to ease the transition and keep us communicating effectively.

Radios

If you feel you should be issued a radio, please contact me. Requests will be forwarded to our Group Communications Officer, Gary Oplinger, who will forward requests to Wing. Decisions regarding the issuance of radios are made by Wing Communications, based on the number of radios available, Table of Allowances, wing priorities, and existing unit communications resources.

Requests must include your name, CAPID, ES qualifications, call sign (if applicable), type of radio requested (VHF, HF, airband), and form (handheld, mobile, or base). *NOTE: Portable VHF radios are scarce, mobiles and bases have a better chance of approval.* Wing has stated they will automatically remove requests from consideration if they fail to provide the requested information or skip the chain of command.

Eric
cap@schwarm.us

CAP INTERNET LINKS

TVCS Website

<http://www.coloradowingcap.org/thompsonvalley/>

Colorado Wing Website

<http://www.coloradowingcap.org>

Rocky Mtn Region Website

<http://www.rmrcap.us/>

CAP National Site

<http://www.cap.gov/>

eServices

<http://www.capnhq.gov/>

CAP Mail

<http://cap.fundlinkllc.com/>

Vanguard (uniforms)

<http://vanguardmil.com/store/>

The Hock Shop (uniforms)

<http://www.thehock.com/>

Squadron Command

<http://www.squadroncommand.com/>

CAPTALK

<http://www.captalk.net/>



**THOMPSON VALLEY
COMPOSITE SQUADRON**
PO BOX 270885
FT. COLLINS, CO 80527

CIVIL AIR PATROL

Civil Air Patrol, the official U. S. Air Force Auxiliary, is a civilian, volunteer, nonprofit, service organization. Its unpaid members perform more than 80 percent of inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue and Coordination Center. Volunteers also take a leading role in aerospace education and conduct one of America's finest youth programs, the Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program.

